CUSTOMS, COURTESIES, AND TRADITIONS

As Army professionals, we MUST:

- Integrate Army Customs, Courtesies, and Traditions within our organizations to develop esprit de corps

- Incorporate Army history into formal and informal activities to inspire a sense of shared organizational and Army heritage in our members

- Act as stewards by continuing to honor Customs, Courtesies, and Traditions that reflect and strengthen the profession’s Essential Characteristics.

References:

FM 7-21.13, The Soldier's Guide, Chapter 4

FM 3-21.5 (FM 22-5) Drill and Ceremonies

References:

AR 600-25, Salutes, Honors, and Visits of Courtesy

- Hand salutes and salutes with arms
- Courtesies to the national flag and the national anthem of the United States
- Reveille and Retreat
- Precedence of Soldiers at parades and reviews
- Retirement Ceremonies
- The Army Song
- Personal Salutes and Honors
- Deaths and Funerals

Esprit de Corps

The winning spirit within the Army Profession, embedded in our culture, sustained by traditions and customs, which fosters cohesive and confident units with courage to persevere.

Through mutual trust and shared understanding esprit de corps promotes teams committed to the Army Ethic.

***Army Culture*:**

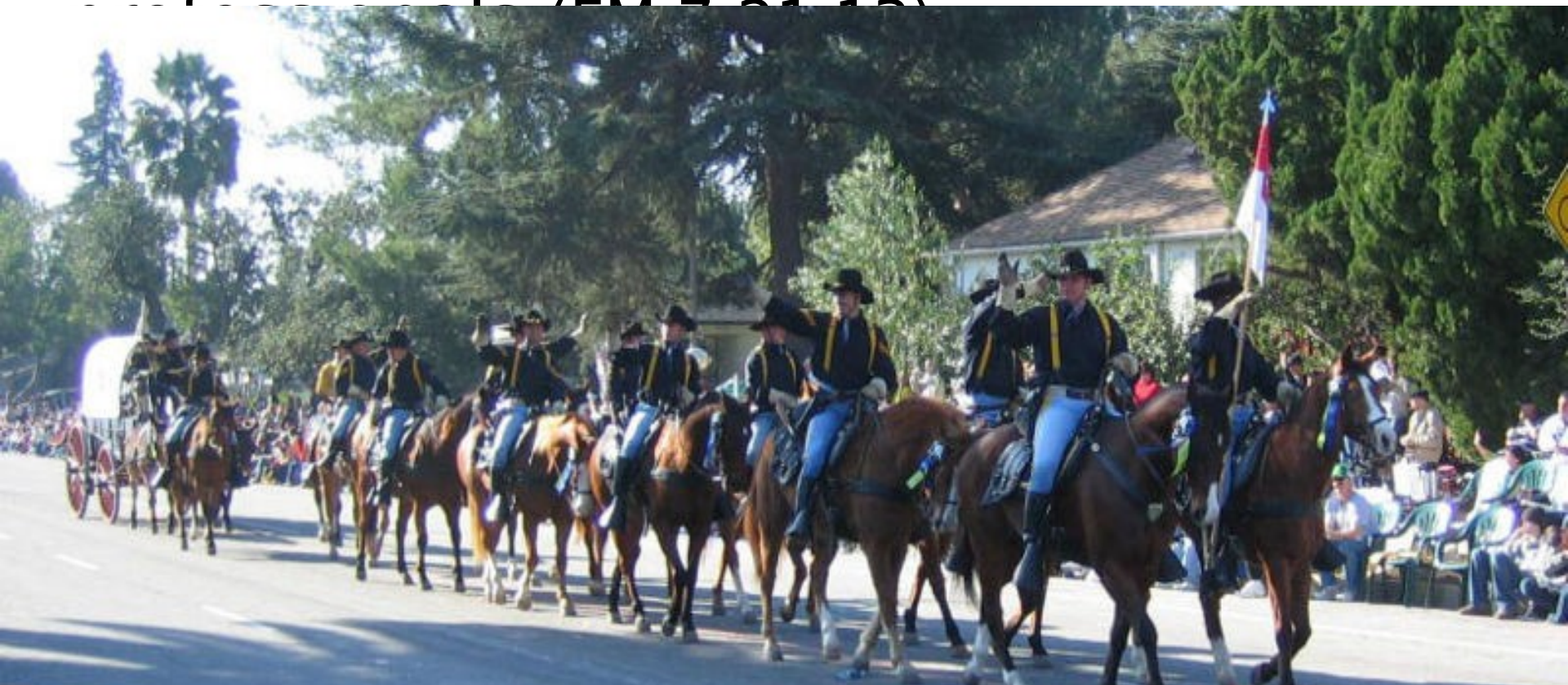
- Consists of the shared attitudes, values, goals, and practices that characterize the larger institution over time.

- Is deeply rooted in long-held beliefs and customs.

- Reflects what it has found to be functionally effective in times of strong need

- Includes a winning esprit de corps.

A ***Custom*** is an established practice. It includes positive actions – things you do – and taboos – things you avoid. The customs of the Army are its common law, governing uniformed and civilian Army



- Never criticize the Army or a leader in public.
- Never go “over the heads” of superiors—don't jump the chain of

command.

- Keep your hands out of your pockets
- Never “wear” a superior's rank by saying something like, “the 1SG

wants this done now,” when in fact the 1SG said no such thing. Speak with your own voice.

- Never turn and walk away to avoid giving the hand salute.
- Never run indoors or pretend you don't hear (while driving, for

example) to avoid standing reveille or retreat.

- Maintain professional posture when interacting with other Soldiers
- Never offer excuses; If you don't know the answer to a

Courtesy among Army professionals is vital to maintain discipline. Courtesy means good manners and politeness in dealing with others, in and out of uniform, in and outside the profession; it provides a basis for developing good human relations. Professional Army courtesy was developed in a military atmosphere and has become a unique and integral part of the military

- The Hand Salute (Proper, When, Where and How to Salute)
- Rendering Honor to the Flag
- Walk on the left of an officer or NCO of superior rank
- When entering or exiting a vehicle, the junior ranking Soldier is the

first to enter, and the senior in rank is the first to exit.

- When talking to an officer of superior rank, stand at attention until ordered otherwise.
- When you are dismissed, or when the officer departs, come to attention and salute
- When outdoors and approached by a senior NCO, you greet the NCO by saying, “Good morning, Sergeant,” for example
- When speaking to or being addressed by a noncommissioned officer of superior rank, stand at parade rest until ordered otherwise
- When an NCO of superior rank enters the room, the first soldier to

recognize the NCO calls the room to “At ease.”

The Hand Salute

The salute is not simply an honor exchanged. It is a privileged gesture of respect and trust among Soldiers. Remember the salute is not only prescribed by regulation but is also recognition of each other's commitment, abilities, and professionalism.

The way you salute says a lot about you as a Soldier. A proud, sharp, crisp, and smart salute shows pride in yourself and your unit and that you are confident in your abilities as a Soldier. A sloppy salute might mean that you're ashamed of your unit, lack confidence, or at the very least, that you haven't learned how to salute correctly.

The Hand Salute – When

All Soldiers in uniform are required to salute when they meet and recognize persons entitled (Commissioned AND Warrant Officers) to a salute. A salute is also rendered:

- When the United States National Anthem, "To the Color," "Hail to the Chief," or foreign national anthems are played
- At reveille and retreat ceremonies, during the raising or lowering of

the flag

- On ceremonial occasions such as changes of command or funerals
- When pledging allegiance to the US flag outdoors
- To uncased National Color outdoors
- To officers of friendly foreign countries
- Outdoors includes theaters, shelters over gas station pumps, covered walkways, and other similar shelters that are open on the sides

The Hand Salute – When

- When an officer approaches a uniformed group outside, the first Soldier to recognize the officer will call “Attention” and all Soldiers will salute and remain at attention until given “At Ease”, “Rest”, “Carry on”, another command, or until the officer passes.

- If Soldiers are performing a work detail, only the person in charge will come to attention and salute

The Hand Salute – When Not Required

When it is inappropriate or impractical (in public conveyances such as planes and buses, in public places such as inside theaters, or when driving a vehicle). Salutes are not required when:

- Indoors, unless reporting to an officer/board or when on duty as a guard
- A prisoner
- Saluting is obviously inappropriate. In any case not covered by specific instructions, render the salute.
- Either the senior or the subordinate is wearing civilian clothes
- When you are working (for example, under your vehicle doing maintenance)
- Carrying articles with both hands
- Working as a member of a detail, or engaged in sports or social functions where saluting would present a safety hazard

The Hand Salute – HOW

- When reporting or rendering courtesy to an individual, turn your head and eyes toward the person addressed. Palm facing down, raise the right hand sharply to the correct position in one, smart motion without any preparatory movement.

- The outer edge of the hand barely cants downward, so that neither the back of the hand nor the palm is clearly visible from the front.

- Your fingers are together, straight, and your thumb extended along the hand in line with the fingers. Your hand, wrist, and forearm are straight, forming a straight line from your elbow to your fingertips. Your upper arm (elbow to shoulder) is horizontal to the ground.

- When dropping the salute, bring your hand directly down to its natural position at your side, without slapping your leg or moving your hand out to the side. Any flourish in the salute is improper.

The Hand Salute – HOW

· The proper way to salute when wearing the beret or without headgear is to raise your right hand until the tip of your forefinger touches the outer edge of your right eyebrow (just above and to the right of your right eye).

- When wearing headgear with a visor, with or without glasses, the forefinger touches the headgear slightly above and to the right of your right eye.

- When wearing headgear without a visor or uncovered and wearing glasses touch the tip of the right forefinger to that point on the glasses where the temple piece of the frame meets the right edge of the right brow.

The Hand Salute – HOW

- When approaching an officer, start your salute far enough away from the officer to allow time for your salute to be seen and returned. The salute is initiated six paces away and terminated upon acknowledgement or until you pass the officer.

Use of “SIR” and “SERGEANT”

- All commissioned officers are addressed as “SIR”/”MA’AM”

- Regardless of rank, Army warrant officers are officially addressed as Mister (Mrs., Miss, Ms.). All warrant officers, WO1 through CW5 are addressed as "sir“/”ma’am”. Unofficially, the informal title of "Chief" is often used as a familiar form of address for Chief Warrant Officer.

- “Yes” and “No” should always be accompanied with “Sir/Ma’am”

- All NCOs should be addressed as “Sergeant” with the exception of the First Sergeant and Sergeant Major

Tradition is a customary pattern of thought, expressed in the things we do and say, and in the uniform we wear. It is information, beliefs, and customs handed down by word of mouth or by example from one generation to another. Our traditions are really the ‘Army Way,’ and it gives an Army professional a feeling of pride to understand just why we do things the way we do (FM 7-21.13).

- Ceremonial duties. Soldiers of the Old Guard, the 3d Infantry, have been Sentinels of the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier since 1948
- Distinctive items of clothing worn in your unit such as headgear, belt, buckles, and tankers' boots; Cavalry units’ spurs and hats; Airborne, Ranger and Special Forces Beret
- NCO Promotion Induction Ceremony
- The promotion ceremony and party
- Reenlistment/Extension Ceremonies
- Unit mottoes or even “Hooah”
- The Bugle Call, The music you hear at various hours of the day (for example, “Reveille,” “Retreat,” and “Taps”) or during ceremonies (funerals, change of command, etc.)

Summary

- Developing and sustaining the Army's winning spirit is vital to an organization remaining effective
- To cultivate that spirit, Army professionals:
  - Integrate Army Customs, Courtesies, and Traditions within their organizations to develop esprit de corps
  - Incorporate Army history into formal and informal activities to inspire a sense of shared organizational and Army heritage in their members
  - Steward the Army by continuing to honor Customs, Courtesies, and Traditions that reflect and strengthen the Army Profession's Essential Characteristics

Where could we include a sense of history in the professional ceremonies of our organization?

How are we demonstrating professional courtesy in our daily interactions?

Are we demonstrating a commitment to the profession by preserving our traditions?